

Rachel I. Orgill and Mary E. Orgill

My grandmother, Rachel I. Orgill was, perhaps, the first practical nurse-midwife to take care of the people in the little community of Daniel. In those days people relied largely upon the power of the Priesthood of their church in asking God to make them well. For medicines they used herbs and barks. My grandma knew a lot about medicines. She kept us grandchildren healthy with various teas--chokecherry bark, yarrow etc.; all bad tasting. Grandma would say, "By thunder, that child looks peaked.", and we were trapped.

But Grandma knew many other wonderful things to make people well, and so she, "Aunt Rach", was held in high esteem in her community.

My father was taught many of Grandma's medicines and he often prescribed for us children. I remember taking Sulfur and Molasses, also something he called "Jallop"; this was the most evil tasting brew I ever encountered. However, Pa's remedies worked. At my graduation from High School I was to give a speech but lost my voice entirely. In desperation I took every med available with no results, until Pa fixed Glycerin and Whisky. This almost immediately cut the hoarseness and I was able to do my part.

My mother, Mary E. Orgill, inherited Grandma's place as our community practical nurse. By this time there were doctors to attend most births, but Mother assisted, in fact, a large percent of the births in Daniel had Mother as the nurse. After the birth, Mother would tend the mother and baby until the mother was able to be about again.

Mother had learned modern nursing ways. There was an elderly lady, Marie Erickson, an R.N., who lived in our community. Marie taught Mother many valuable things. At one time, a series of medical lectures was given

by the L.D.S. Relief Society to instruct rural people on nursing. Mother attended these lectures also.

The one thing I remember most about Mother's nursing was her "Hot Packs". These were woolen cloths which she dipped in boiling water, rung very dry, then put on the chest and back of people who were suffering from severe colds or Pneumonia. (Pneumonia was a greatly feared condition that took the lives of many people in those days.) Mother was proud of the fact that the local doctor told her he had never seen anyone do this treatment more expertly. Many people felt and said that they owed their lives to Mother because of the nursing she gave them at these times. Among Mother's possessions one of the things most valued was her woolen Hot-Pack clothes.

As Mother grew older and the need for rural nursing diminished, she supported herself by tending elderly and terminally ill people in their homes. Mother gave such loving and expert care that she was greatly in demand and could have had jobs all over the state had she wished to go.

With Mother, as with Grandma, nursing was a labor of love. They served proudly and gladly in a time when to be a nurse was to truly be an "Angel of Mercy". They received no pay and expected none; to help someone who needed them was sufficient reward.



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